IN THE CLAIMS:

A complete listing of the claims is set forth below. Please amend the claims as follows:

1. **(Previously Presented)** A global content directory for a distributed plurality of seller databases, each seller database being associated with a corresponding seller and distinct from other seller databases in the distributed plurality of seller databases, the global content directory comprising:

a directory structure comprising a plurality of product classes organized in a hierarchy, each product class categorizing a plurality of products and defining one or more attributes of the products categorized in the product class;

one or more pointers associated with each product class in the plurality of product classes, each pointer identifying the seller database in the distributed plurality of seller databases in which product data enabling a product transaction is stored for products associated with the product class, the seller database identified by the pointer being associated with its corresponding seller and being distinct from the other seller databases in the distributed plurality of seller databases; and

a search interface operable to communicate, in response to a selection of a product class by a user of the global content directory, a search query for product data to the one or more seller databases identified by the one or more pointers associated with the selected product class, each seller database being associated with its corresponding seller and distinct from the other seller databases in the plurality of seller databases.

2. **(Original)** The directory of Claim 1, wherein the directory structure comprises a lightweight directory access protocol (LDAP) directory.

3. **(Original)** The directory of Claim 1, wherein the directory structure is distributed between a plurality of computers.

4. **(Original)** The directory of Claim 1, wherein the directory is coupled to the seller databases using the Internet.

5. **(Original)** The directory of Claim 1, further comprising one or more additional directory structures, each directory structure comprising the same classes but organized using different hierarchies.

6. **(Original)** The directory of Claim 1, wherein the search query comprises a structured query language (SQL) query.

7. **(Original)** The directory of Claim 1, wherein the search query includes one or more attributes of the class selected by the user.

8. **(Original)** The directory of Claim 1 , wherein the search query includes values for one or more desired product features specified by the user.

9. **(Previously Presented)** The directory of Claim 1 , wherein the search interface is further operable to receive search results from the one or more seller databases each associated with its corresponding seller and distinct from the other seller databases in the plurality of seller databases in response to the search query, the search results including product data associated with one or more products satisfying the search query, the directory operable to communicate the search results to the user.

10. **(Previously Presented)** The directory of Claim 9, wherein the directory is operable to:

receive a selection from the user of a product for which product data is included in the search results; and

communicate address information associated with a seller database associated with a seller of the selected product, the seller database including product data for the selected product, the address information enabling the user to communicate with the seller associated with the seller database to conduct a commerce transaction relating to the selected product.

11. **(Previously Presented)** A method for facilitating an electronic commerce transaction, comprising:

providing a plurality of users access to a global content directory for a distributed plurality of seller databases, each seller database being associated with a corresponding seller and distinct from other seller databases in the distributed plurality of seller databases, the global content directory comprising:

a directory structure comprising a plurality of product classes organized in a hierarchy, each product class categorizing a plurality of products and defining one or more attributes of the products categorized in the product class;

one or more pointers associated with each product class in the plurality of product classes, each pointer identifying the seller database in the distributed plurality of seller databases in which product data enabling a product transaction is stored for products associated with the product class, the seller database identified by the pointer being associated with its corresponding seller and being distinct from the other seller databases in the distributed plurality of seller databases; and

a search interface operable to communicate a search query for product data to the one or more seller databases identified by pointers associated with a selected product class, each seller database being associated with its corresponding seller and distinct from the other seller databases in the plurality of seller databases;

receiving a selection of a product class from a user; and

in response to the selection of the product class by the user, communicating a search query for product data to one or more seller databases identified by one or more pointers associated with the selected product class.

12. **(Original)** The method of Claim 11, wherein the directory structure comprises a lightweight directory access protocol (LDAP) directory.

13. **(Original)** The method of Claim 11, wherein the directory structure is distributed between a plurality of computers.

14. **(Original)** The method of Claim 11, wherein the search interface communicates with the seller databases using the Internet.

15. **(Original)** The method of Claim 11, wherein the search query comprises a structured query language (SQL) query.

16. **(Original)** The method of Claim 11, wherein the search query includes one or more attributes of the class selected by the user.

17. **(Original)** The method of Claim 11, wherein the search query includes values for one or more desired product features specified from the user.

18. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 11, further comprising:

receiving search results from the one or more seller databases each associated with its corresponding seller and distinct from the other seller in the plurality of seller databases in response to the search query, the search results including product data associated with one or more products satisfying the search query; and

communicating the search results to the user.

19. **(Previously Presented)** The method of Claim 18, further comprising:

receiving a selection from the user of a product for which product data is included in the search results; and

communicating address information associated with a seller database associated with a seller of the selected product, the seller database including product data for the selected product, the address information enabling the user to communicate with the seller associated with the seller database to conduct a commerce transaction relating to the selected product.

20. **(Previously Presented)** Global content directory software for a global content directory for a distributed plurality of seller databases, each seller database being associated with a corresponding seller and distinct from other seller databases in the distributed plurality of seller databases, the global content directory software embodied in a computer-readable medium and when executed operable to:

provide a directory structure comprising a plurality of product classes organized in a hierarchy, each product class categorizing a plurality of products and defining one or more attributes of the products categorized in the product class;

provide one or more pointers associated with each product class in the plurality of product classes, each pointer identifying a seller database in a distributed plurality of seller databases in which product data enabling a product transaction is stored for products associated with the product class, the seller database identified by the pointer being associated with a corresponding seller and being distinct from the other seller databases in the distributed plurality of seller databases;

receive a selection of a product class from a user; and

in response to the selection of the product class by the user, communicate a search query for product data to one or more seller databases identified by one or more pointers associated with the selected product class, each seller database being associated with its corresponding seller and distinct from the other seller databases in the plurality of seller databases.

21. **(Original)** The software of Claim 20, wherein the directory structure comprises a lightweight directory access protocol (LDAP) directory.

22. **(Original)** The software of Claim 20, wherein the directory structure is distributed between a plurality of computers.

23. **(Original)** The software of Claim 20, wherein the software communicates with the seller databases using the Internet.

24. **(Original)** The software of Claim 20, wherein the search query comprises a structured query language (SQL) query.

25. **(Original)** The software of Claim 20, wherein the search query includes one or more attributes of the class selected by the user.

26. **(Original)** The software of Claim 20, wherein the search query includes values for one or more desired product features specified by the user.

27. **(Previously Presented)** The software of Claim 20, further operable to:

receive search results from the one or more seller databases each associated with its corresponding seller and distinct from the other seller databases in the plurality of seller databases in response to the search query, the search results including product data associated with one or more products satisfying the search query; and

communicate the search results to the user.

28. **(Previously Presented)** The software of Claim 27, further operable to:

receive a selection from the user of a product for which product data is included in the search results; and

communicate, to the user, address information associated with a seller database associated with a seller of the selected product, the seller database including product data for the selected product, the address information enabling the user to communicate with the seller associated with the seller database to conduct a commerce transaction relating to the selected product.